

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Committee,

My name is Hannah Ticknor and I am 17 years old. Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony. I am here to ask you to table Senate Bill 415, which would designate a state insect.

I know that this is an effort for students to learn more about the legislative process, but there are other ways to learn about government that do not increase your workload. With around 2,000 bill proposals each legislative session, there is already ample legislation to be able to testify for or against without creating additional proposals. I think that it is great when students get involved, but we should be able to work on already existing legislation.

Last time I was here at the Capitol, I was accused of not liking state symbols. That is not true; but I do think that the ones that we have are already a great representation of Montana, and I believe that if we get too many, they will not be special anymore. Montana already has a state butterfly. I realize that other states have adopted excessive symbols to represent their states, but that doesn't mean that Montana should do the same.

We are facing a budget shortage in Montana, and we should be looking for ways to cut costs and save limited tax dollars for needed programs. It is estimated to cost thousands of dollars to draft a bill and bring it to committee. Please ask yourself, if you were paying for all costs for this, out of your pocket, would it still be worth proposing? If not, the tax payers probably would not want to fund it either.

Please always table unnecessary bills, including SB415.

Thank you,
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